did not take place in the centre of the mass as might do so under ordinary conditions but commenced at the periphery of the growth.

The work was afterwards transferred to the McGregor Mowbray Clinic of Hamilton which has borne the entire expense of the earlier chemical investigation. The preparations originally employed contained relatively small quantities of the active principle. Recently the co-operation of Professors A. Bruce Macallum and A. A. James of the Department of Biochemistry of the University of Western Ontario has been enlisted, and they have developed a preparation from beef livers which contains the active principle in a highly concentrated form and can be rapidly and economically prepared. These preparations effect no change in blood pressure. The clinical results to date in patients who have received the treatment may be summarized as follows. In one treatment there was complete disappearance of the tumour mass. In others still under treatment a reduction has been noted. In every case the progress of the disease has been arrested and the life of the patient prolonged beyond that of the prognosis given before treatment commenced. No radical claims are advanced for this treatment but the results obtained clinically warrant a more extensive investigation which is now being carried out at the University of Western Ontario and at the McGregor Mowbray Clinic in Hamilton. The letter of Dr. Howitt is dated July 8th.

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN HEALTH

Speaking in support of a motion offered at the last meeting of the British Medical Association, to the effect that the Council be instructed to consider and report on how branches and divisions of the Association as voluntary bodies, could make their contribution towards public education in health, E. R. Fothergill said that the work of the Association in breaking down individualism and exclusiveness and safeguarding the proper interests and the honour and rights of the profession had won for it the respect and confidence of governments and the people they governed. This achievement opened the door towards its second ideal—*viz.*, preventive medicine. Much had been done centrally, and it was now important to see if more could not be done locally. The motion was passed.

We have through an oversight, omitted to refer to the recently organized *Bulletin of Hygiene,* published monthly by the Bureau of Hygiene and Tropical Diseases, London, a publication designed to cover all branches of public health and preventive medicine. This plan is sufficiently wide to cover a very large field, but on looking over the *Bulletin* it is seen that the method of abstracting and summarizing the various results, allows of much condensation. The condensation, however, does not take place at the expense of clearness, and the quality of the abstracts is admirable. It is unusual, but no less welcome to find that illustrations are included.

Such a Bulletin well conducted will be valuable to a large circle of readers. We wish it every success and look for a growth and expansion of its scope such as we understand its Editors are proposing to attempt.

Correspondence

Our London Letter

(From our correspondent)

The Smoke Nuisance. The pea-soup type of fog "enjoyed" by London, particularly in November, is such a feature of the city that it seems hardly possible to believe that it will one day disappear. However, the campaign for smoke abatement all over Great Britain is having some effect on the capital for the London County Council has recently agreed to make an annual contribution of £100 for three years towards the cost of certain investigations by a committee of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research into atmospheric pollution and the cause of fogs. The City of London has also given £50 as an annual contribution for the same object and certain other big cities are following this example. The effect of smoke and fog on health is difficult to estimate although it is certain that both directly and indirectly it is immense. The effect upon certain buildings is, however, begin-

ning to be obvious and Sir Frank Baines has recently stated that H. M. Office of Works would save £120,000 annually if the air in the towns were as clean as it is in the country. Owing to the acids contained in certain forms of smoke, destruction of the stone of which many buildings in London are made is going on at an alarming rate. The Houses of Parliament are stated to show this "crumbling" and those who are interested in the campaign for smoke abatement hope that this may result in some official support for their efforts. It has been estimated that a certain big town in the north of England would save £250,000 annually in laundry bills if smoke were eliminated. It has been said, however, that it will require the death of at least three cabinet ministers before any action is taken by parliament.

The Health of London in 1925. The medical officer of health for the County of London has recently presented his report for the year 1925. He pays attention to the wonderful improvement in the environment of the Londoner in the last fifty years. Towards the end of last century, in the days of the "ragged" schools, "bare feet were the rule and frost-bite, ophthalmia, running ears, enlarged glands resulting from skin infestation, malnutrition and deformities were only too common." To-day the scholars trooping out of school present an entirely different picture and "the main cause of improved sickness and mortality statistics among the child population in the London of to-day is to be found in the heightened sense of responsibility aroused in a generation of parents who have themselves passed through the schools." Some of the principal statistical results for the year 1925 are as follows. The birth-rate was 17.9, the death-rate 11.9 and the infantile mortality rate 68. The death-rate from phthisis was 0.95, from pneumonia 1.04, from bronchitis 0.9 and from cancer 1.44. These figures compare very favourably with those of twenty to thirty years ago when the mean death-rate was round about 20.5 and the infantile mortality rate averaged about 150.

Curious Epidemic in Poplar. A curious outbreak of what appeared at first sight to have been some form of food-poisoning recently occurred in Poplar, an east-end suburb of London. Altogether 108 persons were affected in sixty different houses and three children died. In two of these cases death was said to have been due to an enteritis, and in the third sun-stroke had apparently caused death before enteritis had had time to develop. In these three fatal cases ice cream had been eaten a short time before, and this was at first thought to be the source of the trouble, particularly as of the 108 cases over 50 per cent had also eaten this food. Samples of ice cream, eggs and ice cream powder were subjected to analysis and careful bacteriological examinations by the Ministry of Health's officials, but these samples proved harmless. The local manufacture of ice cream was closely inspected by Ministry authorities, but there was nothing found to which exception could be taken. The water supply was also the subject of an analysis, but neither the water from the houses where the victims had lived or examination of the drains in the neighbourhood revealed anything amiss. None of the usual food-poisoning organisms have been found after a careful bacteriological search, and it is therefore stated that this is not an outbreak of food-poisoning. The cause of the epidemic enteritis remains obscure up to the time of writing.

ALAN MONCRIEFF

THE TWELFTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHYSIOLOGISTS

(From our own correspondent)

The twelfth International Congress of Physiologists was held at Stockholm on August 3rd. The gathering was truly international as there were present six hundred members from every country in Europe, from Canada and the United States, from Japan and China.

No less than two hundred and seventy-two communications were submitted and forty demonstrations made.

One of the most interesting addresses was that of Professor Sir F. Gowland Hopkins, F.R.S., on the biochemical mechanism of tissue oxidation. Although the fact itself is so very familiar that oxygen in the living tissues unites with hydrogen and carbon, sulphur and phosphorus to produce water, carbon dioxide, sulphuric and phosphoric acids, yet hardly anything definite, until quite lately, was known about the actual details of these processes.

The problem may be stated thus: whereas in non-vital oxidations *in vitro,* oxygen will unite with carbon and hydrogen only at a high temperature and with the assistance of a flame or spark, the oxygen in the body unites with those atoms at blood-temperature and without the "powerful" chemicals of the laboratory.

One view — Warburg's — is that the tissue-oxygen is "activated" probably by traces of iron, but this is not the only view theoretically possible; the oxidizable materials themselves, the hydrogen, carbon, etc., might be "activated" to receive the oxygen. The body from which the oxygen departs is "reduced", the body to which the oxygen goes is "oxidized". These two processes are simultaneous and complementary.

The newest view of tissue oxidation is to conceive of an activated hydrogen atom being re-